

# Chula Vista Vision 2020



CHULA VISTA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE  
COMMUNITY FESTIVAL  
APRIL 27, 2002  
EVENT SUMMARY

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**CITY OF CHULA VISTA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE  
CHULA VISTA VISION 2020 – A COMMUNITY FESTIVAL  
APRIL 27, 2002**

## **I. EVENT SUMMARY**

### **A. Introduction**

On Saturday, April 27, 2002, the City of Chula Vista held *Chula Vista Vision 2020 – A Community Festival* on the campus of Chula Vista High School from 9:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The festival was the kick off event for public participation in the General Plan Update. The event was an opportunity for members of the community to identify important issues that need to be addressed as the City undertakes a two year process to update the General Plan. Those who attended were able to give input and get information through three forums:

- Three “Town Hall” Discussion Sessions
- A “Marketplace of Ideas”
- A Community Information and Resource Fair

Free, organized children’s activities were provided by the City’s STRETCH and DASH programs to allow parents to attend and participate in the town hall discussions. The following sections provide an overview of each of the festival components.

### **B. Town Hall Discussions**

The Town Hall discussions consisted of three separate sessions, each running about one hour in length. Each session was framed by a topic question:

1. How can we deal with traffic issues created by continuing growth and development?
2. What facilities (parks, libraries, schools, restaurants, etc) are needed in your neighborhood or the city?
3. How should we preserve and enhance our quality of life in Chula Vista?

About 200 people participated in the discussions throughout the morning. The sessions were facilitated by the independent consulting firm Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG), which has prepared a summary of the discussions (Attachment A), as well as “wall graphics” that were prepared at the event and depict the major themes discussed (Attachment B). In addition, the town hall sessions were video taped, and a summary version is being produced and will be available through the City’s Office of Communications. Some of the key issues and themes that emerged from the sessions are as follows:

- **Traffic and the Quality of Life** – Traffic is a significant issue and factor affecting the quality of life for residents and other members of the community.
- **Jobs/Housing Balance & Public Transportation** – Most of the traffic results from residents commuting to work in other areas of the region—there should be a better balance between local jobs and housing, and more public transportation options.
- **Improve Connections** – Connections between activity centers, and between the east and west sides of the City need to be improved.
- **Growing Demands** – As the city grows, there will be increased demands for housing, educational, social and commercial opportunities.
- **Balance Community Needs** – Facilities, services and amenities should be located in a manner that balances the needs of the different areas of the community.
- **Public Spaces** – The City needs gathering places, parks and cultural centers.
- **Shared Facilities** – Joint use and shared facilities between agencies such as the City and schools districts should be pursued.
- **The Bayfront** – The bayfront is an opportunity to properly plan and develop an important activity and focal center for the community.
- **Preserve Neighborhoods** – It is important to preserve stable residential neighborhoods.
- **Invest in Youth** – The community should invest in our youth through educational programs and facilities, after-school and extra-curricular activities, and arts and music.

### C. Marketplace of Ideas

An information and comment area called the “Marketplace of Ideas” was located just outside the Town Hall Discussion area and staffed by City employees who are working on the General Plan Update. The Marketplace provided details of the General Plan Update process, and allowed many in attendance to ask questions and discuss issues directly with the City staff responsible for the General Plan Update. The Marketplace also invited attendees to record their ideas and comments on community issues—all the responses are contained in Attachment C. Some of the key themes that emerged from the Marketplace of Ideas are as follows:

- **The best neighborhoods include** walking trails; open space; pride of ownership; civic pride; diversity; natural resources; and neighbors.
- **Neighborhoods should be improved by** eliminating vandalism, graffiti, drug dealing and other crime; traffic calming measures; pedestrian amenities; places for families; more restaurants, shops, and entertainment; street maintenance and improvements; bike lanes; inclusionary zoning; and policing.
- **The community needs** affordable housing; hiking and biking trails; extended day youth programs, music, arts, and cultural amenities; its own electric company; decent restaurants; reliable water supply; hotels; upscale retail; a

university; more opportunities to have open community dialogues; and family resource centers.

- **The City should preserve** its sense of community and hospitality; its peacefulness; its cultural diversity; natural habitats; open space; clean air/water; the bayfront; and undeveloped areas.
- **There is optimism about** open space and trails; closing the achievement gap in the schools; remodeling downtown; recycling; a university campus; and schools.
- **There is worry about** education for our youth; extracurricular activities for youth; the water supply; cultural diversity/community dialogue; the natural environment; cost of housing; SR 125; neighborhood bonding; preservation of Bonita and Sunnyside; water infrastructure; uncontrolled growth and development ; traffic congestion; and endangered species.
- **Traffic from future growth and development** should be dealt with by coordinating signalization; stopping future growth; mixed land uses; transit-focused development; one-way streets; requiring garage use; coordinating construction projects between agencies and utilities; using existing capacity better; bike racks at schools; and discounting transit passes.
- **Our quality of life should be preserved by** investing in the west side; rehabilitating houses and apartments; improving the Broadway corridor; insuring access to the bayfront; making the bayfront like Bazaar del Mundo or Seaport Village; enforcing existing standards and thresholds; controlling growth; balance communities with housing for all income levels; cleaner and more efficient energy; increase density and mixed use close to transportation hubs; using meaningful quality of life indicators.

#### **D. Information and Resource Fair**

The community information and resource fair complemented the Town Hall Discussions and Marketplace of Ideas by providing those in attendance with an opportunity to gather information and have questions answered about various services and other resources that are available to the community. The fair showcased some of the existing projects and programs that are currently addressing community issues. Various agencies, organizations and City departments hosted booths, exhibits and displays. The participants included:

- San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
- Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB)
- California Department of Transportation (CalTrans)
- Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce
- Chula Vista Coordinating Council
- San Diego Fair Housing Council
- Chula Vista Elementary School District
- Sweetwater Union High School District
- Southwestern College
- STRETCH/DASH (City after school programs)

- MAAC Project
- American Cancer Society
- South Bay YMCA
- Otay Water District
- Sweetwater Authority
- Chula Vista Transit
- Chula Vista Library
- Chula Vista Recycling
- Cultural Arts Commission
- Chula Vista ATOD Prevention
- Chula Vista Fire Department
- Chula Vista Police Department
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Planning and Building Department
- Human Resources Department
- Community Development Department
- Public Works Department
- Chula Vista Nature Center
- Prudential Financial

**Attachment A**

**TOWN HALL DISCUSSIONS SUMMARY**

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**TOWN HALL DISCUSSIONS SUMMARY**

**Introduction**

The Chula Vista Vision 2020 Community Festival combined three elements; a Community Resource fair, three facilitated discussions, and a “Marketplace of Ideas” where participants could add additional input.

The facilitated discussions portion of the Festival kicked off with a brief overview of the General Plan Update process. Robert Leiter, Director of Planning and Building, presented the introduction. Topics addressed included what is a General Plan and why is the City updating this document plus what is the time frame for this project.

**General Summary of Input**

Chula Vista is a very special place that is at the crossroads. The demand for growth has the potential to provide the resources for a great city or one that is overrun with poor development and inadequate services. The input given at the Community Festival shows that the residents of Chula Vista realize that they have the power to make positive change that will improve the quality of life for all. However, this window of opportunity is limited and the time is now.

The results of the community festival have provided a clear picture of the issues and opportunities for the future of Chula Vista. In the future, Chula Vista will be a place that has a proper balance between jobs and housing. The result of this effort will be a reduction in traffic and increased mobility throughout the City and region. Mobility will be further enhanced by multiple transportation options including increased bus service, an East-West transit line, and adequate right-of-way to encourage the use of alternative transportation systems such as walking, bicycles, and anything else on the horizon. Chula Vista becomes a place where high quality services are strategically located to reduce the perceived imbalance between the West side and the East side. The Bayfront has become a community-gathering place with low intensity development that becomes a local and regional draw. Development standards have been raised and pride of place becomes common amongst all residents.

Most importantly the future of Chula Vista is the attention paid to families. This is a place where one can get an education from cradle to grave. This is a place where your children desire to remain in the community because they can find affordable housing and not have to move away. This is a place where the built environment and the social services are as good as the climate. This is a place called Chula Vista.



## **Session 1 Topic: How can we deal with traffic issues created by continuing growth and development?**

Summary: Traffic is a significant issue and a barrier to improving the quality of life for those who live, work, and play in Chula Vista. It was noted by the participants that residents commuting to other areas in the region cause much of the traffic. In the future, the City must reduce the need for commuting by aggressively seeking a balance between jobs and housing, increase public transportation options (especially East/West connections), and use intelligent transportation systems (ITS) such as synchronized signals and other advanced technologies.

### **General Observations of Participants**

- The City should create a future that allows one to live and work in the same area.
- Activity centers should be connected by public transportation including trolleys and buses.
- There should be a plan to create one comprehensive transit system for the South Bay. The system would include buses, trains, and trolleys with one universal fare card.
- The City should focus on the connection between education and transportation. A transportation linkage to schools and colleges is important.
- Participants agreed that the one future they do not wish to have is to become more like Los Angeles.
- We should have a “yellow light” (caution) on development proposals. The impact on traffic and other quality of life issues should be linked to development proposals.

### **Public Transportation**

- For some, the bus and trolley work well.
- The City should build commuter parking lots. For example, there should be a park and ride at Southwestern College.
- Right-of-way should be provided for mass transit. For example, on the east end of the City, new development should provide for an adequate right of way that would allow for expansion, a bus lane, or a trolley line. Also consider the need for additional bicycle and alternative vehicle lanes.
- There should be more east-west bus service.
- Create a subway parallel with H Street.
- But this is expensive.
- Buses are jammed in H Street traffic. No solutions were offered.
- There should be a bus on L Street to provide a better East/West connection.

## **The Bayfront**

- There should be dedicated bike paths and pedestrian paths along the Bay front– a Bay Bikeway. These paths should connect the various activity centers along the Bay front.
- High-rise development shouldn't be allowed on the bayfront– it would increase congestion on I-5.

## **College Connections**

- Direct routes should be provided to the proposed “UC South” campus.
- There should be an express bus to UC San Diego, San Diego State and Southwestern College.

## **Streets and Sidewalks**

- Provide sidewalks on L Street. Although L Street has been improved, no specific location was cited.
- Fix the “dips”. The East/West streets are notorious for their “dips” in the roadways. One example cited was the “dip” on E Street at First.

## **Development**

- Encourage balanced development in Chula Vista. There should be an appropriate mix of housing, jobs, and retail.
- Declare a moratorium on residential development– a “yellow zone” for development. The thought was if you do not build it, they would not come. Institute measures to tell us when “enough is enough” for development. The link for development is the capacity of the road system and other services to absorb the additional development. The City should not allow development without considering the impact on services and roadways.
- Create an East Side Civic Center.
- Improve access in the subdivisions. There are too many cul-de-sacs on the Eastside. The Otay Ranch has a limited number of access points. More access points need to be developed out of the Village.

## **Transportation-Land Use Connection**

- Link transportation and land use.
- Recognize that right-of-way in development needs to be twice as wide. The development at Otay Ranch was cited as an example of where this is important.

The reason for a wide right-of-way is to allow additional lanes, bus lanes, bike lanes, or other long-term transportation programs room to work.

- Increase density and serve it with trolley service.
- Plan routes and freeway access to minimize neighborhood congestion
  - Telegraph Canyon/East H is a problem.
  - Another example cited was the Palomar interchange.

## **East-West Connections**

- Create the ability to travel from East Chula Vista to jobs downtown and in Kearny Mesa in under 45 minutes:
  - Express bus such as L.A.'s Metro Rapid bus.
  - A trolley extension – East Side people will use the trolley. It is more upscale than a bus therefore it would be used.

## **Signal Synchronization**

- The City should synchronize the street signals system.
  - A prototype project is already in the works. If successful, the City intends to roll out an extensive synchronize signal system.
- Recognize that synchronization doesn't always work. No specific example in Chula Vista was cited.

## **Highways**

- I-805 is congested.
  - Shorten the commute.
  - Create carpool lanes for I-805.
  - Address where Routes 54 and 905 dump into the I-805.
  - Signage is confusing for H Street/I-805 access.
- Concerns with Route 125 now under construction.
  - Price the toll road to shift traffic from the I-805.
  - Look at the impact of a "non-competition" clause.
  - Look at the configuration of Route 125.
  - Look at buying the toll way.
  - Evaluate Route 125/I-805 interaction.

## **Session 2 Topic: What facilities (parks, libraries, schools, restaurants, etc.) are needed in your neighborhood or the city?**

Summary: As the City of Chula Vista grows and prospers; there will be an increased demand for educational, social, and commercial opportunities. Those opportunities need to be located in such a manner as to balance the needs of the West side and the East side in order to serve all of the residents. The City must require higher development standards to enhance the built environment. These standards should include the concept of sustainability. The Bayfront was cited as a once in a lifetime opportunity to create a special place that reflects the best in Chula Vista and can become a gathering place. This could include walking and biking paths connecting restaurants, shops, medium density housing, and the waterfront.

### **General Observations of Participants**

- The City needs gathering places.
- We should design a beautiful Chula Vista. There are opportunities for civic pride and leadership.
- We should create a “Balboa Park South”.
- The City needs a cultural center or centers.
- There are opportunities for joint use of facilities such as using the school sites for after school programs and additional park space.
- Facilities should focus on kids.
- Facilities should be sustainable from an environmental and financial perspective.
- We need to resolve the East Side vs. West Side issues, including resource allocation and promoting understanding of the diversity of Chula Vista.

### **The Bayfront**

- Have intelligent bayfront development. The idea would be to provide a mix of retail, office, and residential set in a visually pleasant way with pedestrian paths, restaurants, parks, and other amenities.
- Create a “riverwalk”, especially from E Street to the Salt Works.
- Build high-class hotels on the bayfront.
- Create beautiful residential areas with public beach access.
  - Do not allow high-rise residential along the Bay front. The high-rise housing near the Hotel Del Coronado was cited as an example of the type of development that the City should avoid.
- Create a bike path on the bayfront.
- The South Bay power plant is a challenge:
  - We need to remove it, upgrade to current environmental standards or minimize the physical presence of the power plant.
  - There are opportunities to landscape it, provide a park or a tennis facility.
  - Make removal of the power plant a contingency of development agreements.

## **West Side of Chula Vista**

- Increase the focus on Broadway, 3rd Avenue and Main Street.
- Do beautification, landscape and frontage improvements on I-5. For many visitors, this is the front door to Chula Vista and it needs to make the best impression possible.
- It is a positive that the West Side is small and neighborly– keep it this way.
- There isn't a grocery store north of J Street– this needs to change.
- Deal with problems of trash and homelessness in the area– use kids for cleanup duty.

## **City Boundaries**

- Adjust the boundary (and/or the sphere of influence) of the City to the north to include Sweetwater River as the boundary with National City.
- Adjust the South Side boundary.
- Annex the area west of the I-805 that is now part of the unincorporated County area.
- Protect Bonita against threats– cut off commercial development.

## **Investment in Youth**

- Create more schools and parks.
- Increase after-school activities. These types of programs are very important to working parents and can reduce crime.
- Have music and arts programs for kids.
- The schools, the city and parks are not coordinated– this should change.
- Use the schools as the center of activity for the neighborhood. Along with the traditional school use, combine park programs and community meetings at the school site.
- Increase the number of Distinguished Schools in the City.

## **Transportation**

- There should be trolley station crosswalks for kids.
- There should be bike paths throughout the city.
- Parking meters should be removed from 3rd Avenue.

## **Environmental Protection**

- Invest in renewable energy.
- Provide developer incentives for environmental protection and design.
- Use Euro-style water heating. This type of system heats water on demand, therefore reducing energy costs and a holding tank.
- Make it easier to recycle. Create programs and incentives to encourage recycling.
- Construct schools utilizing solar power.

## **Public Safety**

- Provide more police.
- Improve traffic safety.
- Redevelop the Oneida Street Fire Station.
- Improve park safety.

## **Libraries**

- The proposed new library on the East side is a “plus”.
- The library needs to be a grander facility much like other branch libraries.
- Build a library in eastern Chula Vista as soon as possible.

## **Technology**

- Well-designed technology is a “plus”.
  - The palm tree cell tower idea is an example.

## **Economic Growth and Culture**

- There should be a Cultural Arts Center at the Theater (the former UA Glasshouse on Third Avenue) and at other areas.
- Commercial should be varied– especially at the Chula Vista Center. There needs to be a wider mix of products and retailers.
- Broadway redevelopment is an opportunity.
- We need a really good bookstore.
- We need access to upscale restaurants.
- The City should pay artists to work in the city.
- There should be meeting and gathering places.

## **East Side of Chula Vista**

- Decide the future of Otay Lakes Road at H Street. The issue is deciding whether the vacant corner should be a commercial center vs. the expansion of Southwestern College educational facilities.
- Shrinking green space is an issue: Otay Lakes is beautiful but endangered. The increase in development is taking away open space.
- Preserve Bonita.

## **Parks and Green Space**

- Hilltop Park is a positive model.
- The City should create and expand greenbelts:
  - South Bay – expand the bayfront to create a “Balboa Park South”.
  - Create a greenbelt at Otay Lakes.
- Open the Olympic Training Center to the public. Especially the tennis courts. Other participants also requested more access and greater numbers of tennis courts.
- Increase the setbacks between houses to increase open space.
- Recognize that yards are o.k.
- Turn the lot next to Harborside Elementary School into a park.
- Create a skateboard park.
- Create community gardens.

### Topic 3: How should we preserve and enhance our quality of life in Chula Vista?

Summary: Participants concluded with a discussion of the future of Chula Vista and how the City and its residents could preserve and enhance the quality of life in Chula Vista. This future would include:

- **A city where the citizens are fully involved.** It would expand on the collaboration started today and have open communication. The City should work to create communities in all areas. A regularly scheduled Town Hall would encourage participation, much the way that today's session encouraged input. Collaboration would be ensured through avenues such as the Chula Vista Coordinating Council.
- **A progressive-thinking city** that retains its responsiveness to citizens. Community events are commonplace and everyone in the city is aware of the historic and cultural resources that the community offers. There is respect for diversity and all "isms" are gone. The city provides a voice for immigrants.
- **A city with positive public relations and image.** Information is out on the city and its history. It is a special place and people know it. People are aware of the many resources such as the STRETCH and DASH after school programs and the local historic preservation groups.
- **The city facilitates a sense of community** and there is a focus on the people of Chula Vista.
- **The uniqueness of the city and its distinct neighborhoods is preserved.** Electing the City Council by district reinforces this.
- **The Olympic Training Center is a focus** and it dovetails with facilities provided by the University.
- **The city is known for uniqueness and variety in transportation access.** New connections are made and the city makes the most of new modes of transportation. The trolley is planned for and east-west linkages are made either through Bus Rapid Transit or the trolley.
- **There is a focus on sustainable resources** and water is linked with development. Chula Vista will become a green city that uses best practices to reduce the impact on the environment.
- **There is affordable housing for all**, including options for seniors such as upscale mobile homes.
- **The city preserves a family environment.** There are places for teens and youth are encouraged to be responsible for the environment.



- **Higher education is a catalyst.** The city has quality schools— from elementary through college that encourage kids to stay in Chula Vista.
- **The East Side will become a “full-service” community** with shopping, cultural centers, and a university.
- **The Bayfront should be preserved and enhanced** with low-key development, a seaport village, a riverwalk and open space.
- **Parks and open space are preserved and created**, including a regional park in Otay Valley.

**Attachment B**

**TOWN HALL DISCUSSIONS WALL GRAPHICS**